

Research on the path of integrating visual culture into ideological and political theory courses in universities

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Abstract: *In the face of the reality of the rise of visual culture in contemporary culture, integrating visual culture into ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities is the requirement of improving The Times of ideological and political education in colleges and universities. One of the important tasks of integrating visual culture into college ideological and political theory courses is to construct the discourse system of college ideological and political theory courses with images, and replace traditional text narration with image narration. Excellent visual culture provides rich image resources for ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities, and the rapid development of visual technology provides a new form choice for ideological and political education theory courses in colleges and universities.*

Keywords: *visual culture; College ideological and political theory course; Path study*

1. Introduction

At present, the world is turning more and more deeply and its influence is growing. Young college students grow up in the era of rich and even "surplus" image resources, they are tempted and stimulated by colorful images every day, and their cognitive mode is deeply influenced by visual culture. Ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities are the key courses to carry out the fundamental task of cultivating people, which is to educate, guide and shape people. In the face of college students who are deeply influenced by visual culture, ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities must promote the innovation of ideas, content, forms and methods in order to enhance the sense of The Times and the effectiveness. We should effectively leverage the strengths of visual culture while addressing its limitations, and incorporate visual culture into ideological and political theory courses within higher education institutions.

2. Overview of visual culture

Visual culture is very different from the previous language-centered cultural forms. "Image" is the basic form of visual culture presentation, it is not an isolated "thing", but condensation of complex social relations. "The sage has an instinct to see the world, and its description, like its object, is the name of the image." In Chinese traditional culture, "image" is the basic carrier to maintain human nature and the extreme natural origin, not only the reflection of simple objective things, but also the close relationship with the "good and bad luck" in human society. It is the only way for human to have access to the mystery of heaven and earth. At the same time, it also bears the powerful function of humanistic education. Zhouyi said that through the carrier of "elephant", the sage "cut off the good and evil of the world, insight into the fundamental changes of the world", and finally realize the role of "viewing images and setting up teachings to change the customs of the people". In Western academic research, "image" is more regarded as a symbol, which is a dualistic relationship composed of "signifier" and "signified", i.e. form and content. With the advent of the consumer society, French philosopher Guy Debord put forward a famous view: the landscape is a commodity. In other words, image is a kind of "materialized" commodity, which has been regarded as a material force like economy or politics, and is affecting the world more deeply.

Visual culture is produced in the process of "seeing" objects outside the world through visual texts. The English philosopher John Berger said in the opening words of *The Way of Seeing* that "seeing establishes our position in the world around us"[1]. This view has been accepted by thinkers in both China and the West. Traditional Chinese philosophy holds that "view" is an essential activity of human beings and a basic way for sages to make "Changes". "View" can explore the mysteries of the world and grasp

"Tao" -- the source of the world. Plato, the founder of Western philosophy, believed that by looking, we can "imitate the infallible process of God". Aristotle also believed that "looking" enables us to know things and helps us distinguish the differences between things. Therefore, Western philosophy established the tradition of "visual centralism" and held that "looking" has the significance of existentialism. "Seeing" is not only a simple biological behavior, but also contains a lot of hidden complex power operation. French philosopher Michel Foucault studied the act of "looking" in detail, explaining how the modern society uses the act of "looking" everywhere to discipline people, and the deep power structure is hidden behind the "looking" in the modern society. For example, when we watch TV or movies, although it seems to be a free act, in fact, we see what others want us to see, all involving the intentions of others. In other words, "watching" is no longer an unpolluted purely visual activity, but an act full of politics.

Therefore, visual culture takes "visual image" as its core, including the process of perceiving visual image and the products of mental activities formed in this process. Visual culture takes "images" as the main form of expression, and all cultural products related to images can be included in the scope of visual culture, such as fine arts, film and television works, pictures and photography, electronic games, commodity advertising, art exhibitions and so on.

3. Visual culture is integrated into the goals and tasks of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities

At present, visual images have entered the field of ideological and political education, but the integration of ideological and political theory teaching and visual culture is not high, and the two are still in the "running-in period". In the past, when the communication technology was not developed, the information transmission and reception between people could only be passed on by word of mouth. With the advent of the printing era, paper media such as newspapers and books have become the main force of information transmission. After entering the era of images, the way of "reading pictures" has emerged suddenly, and has become the main means for people to transmit and receive information. Therefore, one of the important tasks of integrating visual culture into college ideological and political theory courses is to use images to construct the discourse system of college ideological and political theory courses, and use image narration to replace traditional text narration, but in this process, it is necessary to prevent the polysemy of image interpretation from misreading and distorting the content of college ideological and political theory courses.

3.1. Use images to construct the discourse of college ideological and political theory courses

With the blessing of modern Internet technology and multimedia technology, "reading pictures" has become an important way for college students to obtain information. Images "swarm" college students and are favored and sought after by college students. In order to give full play to the functions of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities, it is necessary to answer the key question of "what to say", that is, what form should the discourse of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities in the image era appear in. Discourse refers to the speech symbol that undertakes the function of information exchange. The discourse of ideological and political education is "a system of speech symbols used by educators and educatees to communicate, propagate, indoctrinate, persuade, describe, explain, evaluate and construct the content of ideological and political education and the inter-subject ideological concepts, value orientation and behavior representation"^[2]. Using images to construct the discourse system of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities refers to the use of images as symbolic carriers for information dissemination of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities. From the function of image, image has the function of transforming the conceptual speculation of "invisible" into the visual experience of "seeing". The traditional teaching of ideological and political theory in colleges and universities relies on text discourse, which lacks vividness and image, and is not well accepted by college students. In view of the cognitive characteristics of "image people" who grow up in the visual culture environment, the discourse of ideological and political education must constantly develop to "image". The image itself has no educational value, but when the relationship of "creator -- image -- receiver" is formed, the image has the possibility of educational value. When "image" enters into ideological and political theory, it is not only a simple "image translation" of ideological and political education theory, but also "the mutual relationship between political belief, ideal direction, life belief, moral obligation and other core socialist values formed under the domination of ideological and political education value"^[3].

3.2. Use image narration to replace text narration of ideological and political education theory courses in colleges and universities

Narrative refers to the behavior of conveying ideas. In the theory of ideological and political education in colleges and universities, image narration is a process of dialogue, and it is also a process in which the subject inculcates information to the object. If using images to construct the discourse of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities is to answer the question of "what to say" of ideological and political theory courses in the age of images, then the problem solved by image narration is "how to say". With the change of cultural form, the narrative mode of human beings has changed from oral transmission to written expression. Now the image has usurped the text, and the direction of narrative is bound to change to the image. Image narration is not simply "image display", but the arrangement of images, so that the content of ideological and political theory courses into a "story", extending the value of image discourse of ideological and political education in colleges and universities. In the early mobilization of the workers' movement, Chen Duxiu, Li Hanjun and others carried out image narration through illustration to expose the ugly face of the bourgeoisie and enlighten the workers' thoughts. The eight giant reliefs on the Monument to the People's Heroes are also wonderful cases of image narration. When people visit the Monument to the People's Heroes, they can enter the context of a story, which begins with the Opium War and ends with the fall of the Kuomintang reactionaries, showing the difficult road to the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and interpreting the spiritual sustenance of the Chinese people's heroes. The content of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities is highly abstract and concise, and the use of images to express the content of ideological and political education is easy to cause the one-sided, formalized and fragmented transmission of the educational content, and then reduce the quality and level of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities. Therefore, it is necessary to deeply explore the image narration of ideological and political education theory courses in colleges and universities. On the basis of ensuring the seriousness and accuracy of the content of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities, we should take into account the ideological and affinity of images, realize the "interesting" and "meaningful" links of images, and interpret educational information well.

3.3. Use visual images to accurately express the mainstream ideological value

However, at present, the use of visual images to construct ideological and political education discourse is still in a relatively basic stage. "The images in ideological and political education need to express the values and emotions behind the images through visible images, that is, the unity between the presentation of facts, the presentation of emotions and the presentation of meanings"^[4]. In the traditional textual discourse, there is a clear and clear relationship between the content of ideological and political education and the text, and there will not be "a thousand readers have a thousand Hamlets". On the contrary, as a symbol, the image has the characteristic of "ambiguity", so the relationship between the image and the content of ideological and political education is less obvious. For example, Lei Feng is no longer a simple "people's army" image, but can refer to thousands of people in the society to help others, and convey the collectivist concept of "always have others in your heart, but not yourself". Some segments of ideological and political education are profoundly abstract and highly contemplative, presenting significant challenges in the utilization of visual imagery. When resorting to the employment of images, it is frequently indispensable to harness rhetorical strategies. For example, the Great Wall can serve as a symbol of national safeguard, while the dragon totem affiliated with Emperor Yan Huang might embody the spirit of the descendants of Huang. Nevertheless, within this rhetorical framework, an inability to precisely identify an appropriate metaphorical entity or a misinterpretation of its significance can give rise to a deviation in the content of ideological and political education. The contents of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities mainly include that if they cannot be completely, accurately and effectively expressed with visual images, the academic rationality and political nature of ideological and political education will be destroyed.

4. The path of integrating visual culture into ideological and political courses in colleges and universities

The ideological and political education theory course in colleges and universities is the key course to carry out the fundamental task of cultivating morality and people, and the central link of the education work in colleges and universities. It shoulders the important mission of training socialist builders and successors with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, the United States and labor. The main content is to educate college students with socially leading ideology, and constantly

improve their ideological quality to serve the society. The Times are changing, the ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities are facing new changes and new problems emerge in an endless stream. In order to actively cope with these challenges, we must adapt to the development of The Times. Visual culture, with its distinctive characteristics of The Times and strong vitality, is an important material for the content innovation of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities, and an important driving force for the innovation of means.

4.1. Create visual idols to guide young college students to firm their ideals and beliefs

Ideal and faith is to illuminate the lighthouse of life, is the spiritual pillar of life and the source of strength, lofty ideals can sweep away the dark and confused life, lofty ideals can support the road of struggle to go steadily and far. No matter in the past, now or in the future, it has always been an important strategic task for the development of the Party and the country to strengthen the education of ideals and beliefs among college students and train socialist builders and successors with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, the United States and labor. The power of example is infinite, and model education is one of the important means of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities. Countless heroes have emerged in every era of China's revolution, construction and development. Their heroic deeds and great pursuits have infected generations of Chinese people, and broadly gathered a powerful force for building socialism with Chinese characteristics. In recent years, the phenomenon of college students chasing stars has become increasingly prominent, and the idols have gradually changed from scientific elites and national heroes to entertainment stars and network red anchors, etc. Some network celebrities either by virtue of good looks or by virtue of cool shooting, show the luxurious and lazy life in short videos, creating a social atmosphere of "appearance level is capital". Under this influence, Petty bourgeoisie life has become the ideal life for college students. The "love of red makeup and armed arms" advocated by people in the revolutionary era is changing to the current "love of makeup and not armed arms". "Visual idol" is an important group that exerts an influence on college students. The integration of visual culture into the ideological and political courses of colleges and universities can take advantage of the development of visual culture, and make innovative use of the unique cultural role of "visual idol" to carry out ideological and political education. Through the production of character propaganda films, character cartoons and other methods favored by college students, those who can set up correct ideals and beliefs for college students will be made into models and shaped into "visual idols" favored by college students, so that college students will gradually be inspired and summoned by these idols with ideological and political education value, and constantly understand their life ideals. Individuals engage in self-examination, reflection, and transformation through the worship and imitation of their 'idols,' ultimately striving for self-perfection.

4.2. Learn from excellent visual cultural works to enrich the content of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities

Excellent visual cultural works are important sources of material for ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities. They have become an important carrier of mainstream ideology. These works have strong communication, influence and radiation power, contain rich value, and can provide appropriate materials for the "main channel" of ideological and political theory courses. Contemporary visual cultural works are most common in film and television works, with pictures, advertisements and short videos as their main forms of expression. Different types of visual cultural works carry different contents of ideological and political education and play different functions in the process of ideological and political education. Static pictures carry the most direct and specific information content. For example, "one picture to understand XX" is an important means of policy publicity, which can briefly sort out and condense the content of the policy and clearly show the logical clues. The information carried by dynamic video is more hidden, but the appeal is stronger. For example, a compelling theme film is artistically sophisticated, has a moving story, and has a positive mindset. The founding of the Party, the Founding of a Republic, and the Founding of an Army can become important curriculum resources for the outline course of modern history. These films transform the empty and boring words on the books into tangible influences that can be seen and felt, showing the historical footprints of the Chinese nation's hard search in modern times, and can more effectively arouse college students' strong enthusiasm for loving the Party and patriotic feelings.

4.3. Make use of new technology of visual culture to enrich the forms and means of daily ideological and political education practice activities

The invention and progress of visual technology serve the needs of people for the production, dissemination and acceptance of images. Fully grasping the application of visual technology can provide more updated methods for the teaching of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and

universities. Image communication technology provides strong support for enhancing the vitality of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities. Taking Virtual Reality (VR) technology as an example, it enables users to experience a sense of immersion, constructs 'real and tangible' environments, and facilitates interactions between theoretical reality and virtual perception, as well as between online and offline contexts. For example, in many red education bases, many venues use VR technology to reproduce the difficult and difficult revolutionary struggle environment of the year, so that viewers can feel the indomitable struggle spirit of revolutionary ancestors, obtain a "practical" experience close to reality, and establish a "connection" with historical events and characters. In addition, many colleges and universities have started the mixed teaching reform. By recording micro-class videos, they carry the thickness of theory with the temperature close to life, making the theoretical courses more pleasant and more listening, and making the ideological and political education in colleges and universities more dynamic and down-to-earth. A typical case in this regard is the "Youth Learning" activity carried out by the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League across the country. This activity invites one favorite peer of college students each time to preach the theory, describes the big theory with the small things around him, and tells the Chinese Dream in multiple languages, which greatly enhances the vividness and interest of theoretical education. In recent years, ideological and political education courses in colleges and universities rely on the "two micro ends" or use platforms such as B station, Zhihu and Douban to carry out ideological and political education in a silent way that college students like to hear and hear. At present, many "micro Party classes" and "micro group classes" are to carry out ideological and political education activities with the help of vivid images. For example, in the Party history learning and education activities to be carried out in 2021, many colleges and universities have organized activities such as "watching movies to learn Party history" and "watching movies to learn ideological and political lessons". Movies come from social life, but they have the mission and task of leading the mainstream socialist values. The core socialist values behind movies are intuitive, tangible and vivid. The film and TV drama *The Age of Awakening* has triggered a wide response among the youth group. The characters Chen Qiaonian and Chen Yannian have touched millions of viewers, and many young people have deeply felt the indomitable struggle spirit of the revolutionary martyrs. In addition, visiting the Red Education Base and visiting the themed photo exhibition also provide new choices for the daily teaching of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities. These novel ways put more emphasis on interaction and sense of experience, and are more in line with the aesthetic needs and acceptance habits of current college students, which can further improve the efficiency of the course and make it produce a more long-term and lasting impact.

5. Summary

The tendency of "visualization" is developing rapidly in all fields of social life, bringing about changes in people's way of thinking and practice. Ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities need to pay full attention to the changes in the thinking mode and behavior mode of current college students, and constantly update the educational ideas, methods and contents according to the characteristics of current college students, so as to obtain more accurate education effects. In the age of images, college students' acceptance of visual images is much stronger than their acceptance of language and text. Visual culture attracts college students' attention with its powerful vivid imagery. A large number of excellent visual cultural works can become materials for ideological and political theory courses, and superb visual technology can enable college students to teach ideological and political education theory content. However, the integration of visual culture into the ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities is in its infancy. This path is still very long and ideological and political educators need to jointly explore and think deeply.

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